ACCULTURATION OF PERANAKAN CULTURE IN THE DIVERSITY OF LAKSA MENU IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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ABSTRACT

The Peranakan refers to one ethnic group that originated from many Chinese ethnicities that intermarried and assimilated with local people in many places in Southeast Asia. They bring many inventions, which enriched cultures and heritages in many Southeast Asian places. One of the most well-known cuisines from Peranakan birth is a Laksa. Laksa is a complex dish consisting of noodles, a side dish usually consisting of seafood, chicken, or egg, and savory broth with many spices and herbs. Laksa can be found in many Southeast Asian countries, especially places with a significant Chinese descendent population. The diversity of the laksa menu is a major marker of the influence of the Peranakan culinary culture in Southeast Asia.

KEYWORDS: Laksa, Peranakan, Acculturation, Southeast Asia, Culinary

INTRODUCTION

The History of the Arrival of the Peranakans in Southeast Asia

Peranakan is a term that refers to a person, family, community, and/or community resulting from mixing Chinese people of various ethnicities with Local residents in Southeast Asia. A wave of immigrants, in particular, began to arrive in various regions in Southeast Asia from the 14th to 17th centuries AD. They began to occupy several areas on the coast of Southeast Asia such as Penang, Malacca, and Singapore (where they were called the Baba-Nyonya), Medan, Palembang, Semarang, Surabaya (where they were called Kiau-Seng) and also parts of Southern Thailand such as Ranong, Phuket, Nakhon Sri Thammarat, Trang, Phangnga, and Takuapa. (West, 2009)

In various definitions, the Peranakans are referred to as a separate ethnic group that can only be found in Southeast Asia. They are also often referred to as Strait Chinese or Strait Chinese Born. The Peranakans dominate the culture that exists in several parts, regions, or areas of Southeast Asia, such as the islands of Penang and Malacca in Malaysia, Medan in Indonesia, and Singapore as a city-state.

Judging from their origins in mainland China, many of the Peranakans identify as "Hokkien" people whose origins come from mainland southeastern Fujian Province, China. However, the Peranakans also have many places of origin, such as descendants of indigenous Malaysians (Aboriginal Malaya), Arabs, or Persians who were influenced by Chinese culture, (mostly from the Quanzhou region who married local Malaysians). Many other Peranakans are of Teochew or Hakka descent, and a small minority of Cantonese. The Baba Nyonya is a sub-group
within the Peranakan community. Peranakan families sometimes arrange marriages from China for their sons or arrange marriages for their daughters with newly arrived Chinese immigrants. The history of the arrival of immigrants from mainland China was recorded in the 10th century AD. Those who mostly came from the Guangdong and Fujian provinces at this time began to sail across the South China Sea, then spread throughout the archipelago. Their arrivals occurred continuously in a constant time until then came a bigger wave from the 15th to 17th centuries AD, following the reopening of trade relations between the Chinese Ming Empire and many political entities in Southeast Asia, especially the Sultanate of Malacca.

At the beginning of the 15th century, the Malacca Sultanate began to expand its influence as the dominant regional power. Malacca began to forge close ties with the Ming Empire, the ruler of China, and territories in mainland East Asia. This close relationship has existed since the beginning of Malacca’s rule, led by Sultan Iskandar Syah (Parameswara) when the explorer, sailor, military leader, as well as diplomat Zheng He (Cheng Ho) came and delivered a message from the then Ming Emperor, Yong Le. Zheng he, was a Chinese Muslim military leader of the Hui ethnicity who was specially sent by Emperor Yong Le to expand his tributary area. (Rodgers, 1996)

Due to economic difficulties in various parts of mainland China, waves of immigrants from China began to look for new places of living and settled on the coast of the Malay Peninsula, the east coast of Sumatra, the northern coast of Java, and Singapore. Some of them then carry out the customs and traditions that developed in the local community while maintaining some of their ancestral cultural traditions. The Peranakans usually have a certain level of indigenous blood, which can be attributed to the fact that most of these immigrants were men who married local women during the Chinese dynasties.

For example, the Peranakans in Tangerang, Indonesia, have such high indigenous bloodlines that they are physically almost indistinguishable from the local population. The Peranakans scattered throughout Indonesia can vary in terms of skin color, ranging from very light to copper brown. Chinese men in Melaka fathered children with female slaves from Java, Batak, and Bali. Their descendants partially moved to Penang and Singapore during the period of British colonial rule. (Hussin, 2007)

(Boen Tek Bio Temple, a place of worship for Cina Benteng Community in Tangerang)
Some Chinese men during the colonial period got slave wives from Nias. Chinese men in Singapore and Penang were supplied with slave wives of Bugis, Batak, and Balinese origin. The British colonial government allowed the sending of wives of the slaves they employed because their presence raised the standard of living of the slaves and gave satisfaction to the slaves they employed. The use of female slaves or housemaids as wives by the Chinese was then widespread. (Klein, 1993)

**Formation of the Cultural Identity of the Peranakans**

The Peranakans retain most of their identity ethnicity and religion they profess (including ancestor worship) but assimilate their language and culture in the land of arrival. In Malaysia, Busana Nyonya (the name for Peranakan women) is Baju Panjang, which is directly adapted from Baju Kurung of the Malay ethnic group. This is due to the batik sarong (skirt wrapped in batik) and three kerosang (brooches). The Peranakan beaded sandals called Kasot Manek are also handmade, which requires a lot of skill and patience. The garments are strong, hung, and sewn on canvas with small faceted glass beads cut—also known as Cut Manek, which originates from the land of Bohemia (a region in the Czech Republic).

In Indonesia, the Peranakans developed their kebaya clothing, most notably the kebaya encim, which comes from the name encim or enci to refer to married Chinese women. The kebaya encim is commonly worn by both Chinese and Peranakan women in the northern coastal cities of Java Island with a significant Chinese population, such as Semarang, Lasem, Tuban, Surabaya, Pekalongan, and Cirebon. This is certainly different from the Javanese kebaya, which is known for its smaller and smoother embroidery, lighter fabrics, and brighter colors. The Peranakans also developed their batik patterns, incorporating symbols from their region of origin. The kebaya encim goes well with the brightly colored coastal batik cloth (Javanese coastal batik), combining symbols and motifs from China; such as dragons, phoenixes, peonies, and lotus flowers. For Men (Baba), wearing a lokchuan (which is a complete costume for Chinese men) is a matter of pride, even though the younger generation only wears part of it, namely a long-sleeved silk jacket with a Chinese collar or a batik shirt.

(Females Wearing Kebaya Encim)
In terms of religion/belief, most Peranakans generally adhere to indigenous Chinese belief systems such as Taoism, Confucianism, and Han Buddhism. Like the Chinese, the Peranakans also celebrate Chinese New Year, the Lantern Festival, and other Chinese festivals, adopting the customs of the land in which they live and the customs of their colonial rulers. There are traces of Portuguese, Dutch, English, Malay, and Indonesian cultural influences in the Peranakan culture. Just like the culture of the people in which they live, the Peranakans still believe in abstinence (superstition), especially among the older generation. In some cases, there are quite a few prohibitions of the Peranakans, which others consider too strict and complicated. But today, most Peranakans no longer practice complicated abstinence to keep up with modern times.

Many of the Peranakan community today have embraced Christianity, especially those who have settled in Indonesia. In Singapore, the Kampong Kapor Methodist Church, founded in 1894 by an Australian missionary, Sophia Blackmore, is considered one of the first Peranakan churches in Southeast Asia. At the time of the church’s founding, Sunday services were conducted in Baba Melayu, and it is still one of the languages used in services at the church to this day.

Despite living in Muslim-majority countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia, converting to Christianity for the Peranakans allows them to continue to consume pork, which has traditionally been an important part of Peranakan cuisine. In terms of language, the Peranakans have traditionally been educated in English in missionary schools for a long time, especially those who live in Pulau Pinang (Penang), Malaysia. (Ooi, 2004).

Peranakan Culinary Traditions and Culture

The culinary culture of the Peranakans (also known as Nyonya culinary) originates from the descendants of early Chinese immigrants who settled in various places in Southeast Asia such as Penang, Malacca, Singapore, and Indonesia. They generally cross-breed with local residents, whether they are from the ethnic Malay, Javanese, Sundanese, Bugis, Banjar, Indian, or those from the Eurasian race. In the life and daily life of the Malay Peranakan community, women are known as Nonya (sometimes called Nyonya), and male Peranakans are known as Baba. In the culinary repertoire of the Peranakans, the dishes served are a combination of various other culinary influences such as Malay, Javanese, Minang, Indian, Tamil (South India), and others.

Mrs. Culinary results from a combination of Chinese ingredients with various special spices and cooking techniques used by Malay and Indonesian people. This gives rise to a similar interpretation of the cuisine of the Peranakans with the cuisine that developed in Malay society and other communities in Indonesia that are equally sharp, flavorful with spices, spicy in taste, and full of exotic herbs. (Ng, Chien Y. et.al, 2016)

In other cases, the Peranakans have adopted Malay cuisine as part of their daily tastes, such as tamarind fish and beef rendang. The main ingredients include coconut milk, galangal (a mustard-scented smooth rhizome that looks similar to ginger), candlenut as a flavoring and thickener, laksa leaves, pandan leaves (Pandanus amaryllifolius), chili paste (belacan), tamarind water, lemongrass, torch ginger buds (kecombrang), bengkoang, kaffir lime leaves, and cincalok – a shrimp-based condiment with a strong sour and salty taste which is usually mixed with lime juice, chili, and shallots and eaten with rice and other side dishes.

There are several growing regional variations in the cuisine of the Nyonya. Dishes from Penang
Island in the northern part of Peninsular Malaysia have Thai influences. This can be seen from the use of acids and other acidic-tasting ingredients that are freer. Cuisine from Singapore and Malacca shows a greater Indonesian influence, such as the use of coconut milk. The classic example, in this case, is Laksa, which the author will describe in this journal. Laksa is served in two variants: Asam Laksa which is known to have originated from Penang, and Laksa Fat made from coconut milk which is known from Singapore and the southern region of Peninsular Malaysia.

The variety of spices used also determines the taste of Laksa and other Nyonya Recipes. Various combinations of spices are ground into a paste with a mortar until they form a specific texture and density. It is said that a madam can know her new daughter-in-law’s skill in cooking just by listening and witnessing her skill in preparing spices with a mortar. The Nyonya recipe is passed down from one generation to the next, and because the preparation of this dish takes a considerable amount of time, it is a dish that is often best served in typical Peranakan homes. (https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/travel/2019/02/deconstructing-laksa-fusion-dish-malaysia-and-singapore)

Some examples of Nyonya specialties include otak-otak, a popular snack made from a mixture of fish, coconut milk, chili paste, galangal, and spices wrapped in banana leaves. Ayam Buah Keluak, is a signature dish that combines chicken pieces with nuts from the pangium edule or kepayang tree for a rich gravy. Itek Tim, is a classic soup filled with duck, tomatoes, green peppers, salted greens, and pickled plums, then gently simmered together. In terms of desserts a la Nyonya, including colorful cakes and sweets with a sticky texture. (https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2008/11/23/039dapur-naga039-a-peek-039peranakan039-cuisine.html)

Other dishes from the Peranakans living on the east coast of the Malay Peninsula (Kelantan) include kesum eggs, chicken kerabu and jam kau which heavily draws from Chinese, Malay, and Thai cooking traditions. While in Terengganu, some of the popular Peranakan foods are the local version of lontong, chicken pachok which resembles satay with a stronger taste, fish with spicy sour sauce, and slow-cooking chicken with palm sugar.

The Peranakans in Malacca are well known for their variety of traditional cakes, such as kue lepak Kacang, ang ku kue (the black variant is called kueh kuk Hitam), kueh tae or nastar, Nyonya bak chang, apom balik (the Peranakan version is very similar to Indonesian serabi), kueh bakol, tapae, kueh kochi, kueh bongkong, prawn spices, pulot enti, kueh gulong (another variant is kueh kapit), kueh sponge, galeng galoh (also known as face series), kueh bangket and many other cakes.

These traditional cakes are sometimes made in conjunction with festivals celebrated by the Peranakans. For example, kueh genggang (also known as kueh lapis), is a type of cake that is arranged in layers, generally often eaten during Chinese New Year to symbolize the ladder of continued prosperity. There are many cities in Southeast Asia filled with restaurants serving Nyonya food. They are in Penang, Kuala Lumpur, and Malacca in Malaysia, Singapore, Jakarta, Semarang, and Surabaya in Indonesia.
Laksa as a Culinary Product of the Peranakans in Southeast Asia

Laksa is one of the most recognized culinary culture products originating from Southeast Asia. With a variety of ingredients, herbs, spices, vegetables, and cooking techniques that vary from region to region. It cannot be said which region in Southeast Asia is where Laksa first appeared because each Laksa has its own characteristics. However, Laksa is generally present in coastal areas, on the banks of large rivers, or where many Peranakans live. Some examples of regions in Southeast Asia that are known for their Laksa are Penang, Kuala Lumpur, Malacca, Singapore, Medan, Palembang, Batavia/Jakarta, Banjarmasin, and Tangerang. Interaction with many foreign traders from various parts of the world, bringing many spices, seasonings, and ingredients to support Laksa which makes Laksa in the region famous for its own characteristics. (https://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/how-interrmarriage-created-one-of-the-worlds-most-delicious-foods)

There are various opinions about the origin of Laksa. One opinion suggests that the word laksa comes from the ancient Persian word for "noodles". According to Denys Lombard in his book “Le Carrefour Javanais. Essai d'histoire globale II”, one of the earliest records of the word Laksa used for “mi” and was first found in the Javanese Biluluk inscription dated 1391 from the Majapahit Empire era where the word hanglaksa is. Hanglaksa in Kawi means "vermicelli maker" on the other hand, in Sanskrit Laksa means "one hundred thousand", referring to the number of strands in noodles/vermicelli. The term Laksa or lakhshah is also believed to have come from Persian, which was later revealed to be Hindustani to refer to a type of vermicelli-like material.

Another theory as to the origin of the dish Laksa refers to a Chinese Ming Dynasty Naval expedition in the 15th century led by Zheng He (Cheng Ho). The fleet under his command is recorded to have made voyages to almost all maritime areas of Southeast Asia. Although the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia had existed before and they had settled in various parts of Maritime Southeast Asia long before Zheng He's expeditions, it was after Zheng He's training that the number of Chinese migrants and traders increased significantly. The Chinese diaspora who came to this Southeast Asian region later married local residents, and together they formed an
intercultural Peranakan community. In Singapore, Laksa is believed to have emerged after the interaction between the Peranakans and the local Malays.

It’s different in Indonesia. This dish is widely considered to have been born from a mixture of culinary cultures in the form of cooking practices by local people and Peranakan immigrants. Historians believe Laksa is a dish that was born from the cultural marriage between local people in Southeast Asia and the Chinese immigrants that happened as it is. This, in other words, places Laksa as the dish that best represents the Peranakan culture in Southeast Asia. (https://www.kompas.com/food/read/sejarah-laksa-berawal-dari-pernikahan-peranakan-di-asia-tenggara)

At the beginning of the establishment of Chinese settlements around the sea coast of Southeast Asia, only men generally dared to go out of the house to earn a living, either by trading or doing other activities. When they decided to chain to a new area, the Peranakan who generally worked as traders or sailors had already thought about finding a new wife in their new area in the future. They then married a girl from the local population, from whom various local spices, herbs, and vegetables, and coconut milk were introduced into the noodle soup known to male immigrants from the homeland (China) before. This dish is then served to their husbands. Over time, this dish has helped create a hybrid Chinese culture with the local culture, generally of Malay or Javanese ethnicity. Because the Peranakan community has combined elements of the culture of their homeland with the local culture, the cuisine of the Peranakan community in various parts of Southeast Asia is very synonymous with the characteristic of a variety of tastes, which adapt to local treasures.

Laksa Culinary in Various Regions of Southeast Asia

Various kinds of Laksa are developing in the Southeast Asian region with various regional variations, vendors, vendors, and innovations that enrich Laksa. Laksa can be broadly categorized based on its two main ingredients: noodles and soup. Most of the preparations in making Laksa are also added with various spices and herbs. Two of the most widely used herbs are Vietnamese mint and coriander leaves, known in Malay as daun kesum or 'leaf laksa'. Another popular garnish used for many Laksa recipes is the unopened torch ginger flower buds (kecombrang), generally sliced or grated.

Thick-textured rice noodles, also known as "laksa noodles" are most commonly used. In addition, thin vermicelli (米粉 "bee hoon") is also commonly used. Some other variants of laksa use fresh hand-made vermicelli from scratch and other types of noodles. A unique thing is seen in the Laksa Johor dish, which uses spaghetti made from wheat, while the Kelantan Laksa is known for its wide slices of rice noodle rolls with a texture similar to shahe fen.

Types of Laksa are generally classified based on the soup used in the recipe; be it thick and savory coconut milk, fresh sour and sour (tamarind, sliced tamarind), or a combination of the two. Coconut milk will add flavor and fat quality to the Laksa broth served. Laksa with rich coconut milk and seasoned with strong aromatic spices is usually described in Malaysia and Singapore as Laksa Fat or Nyonya Laksa. Fat in Malay culinary descriptions specifically refers to the presence of coconut milk which adds a distinctive richness to a dish, while Nyonya alludes to the origin of Peranakan dishes and the role of women in Peranakan cuisine. "Laksa" in Malaysian society is
also an alternative name used for "mee Kari", a very popular noodle soup dish in the region that is also sometimes known as curry laksa. The most common toppings for various versions of the coconut laksa soup are eggs, fried tofu, bean sprouts, and spices, with a spoonful of sambal terasi (belachan) as a compliment.

In the Malay dictionary, "acid" refers to any ingredient that makes a dish taste sour, such as Tamarind, or sliced tamarind (Malay: Asam Gelugor), which comes from a different tree). The main ingredients of tamarind laksa are usually shredded fish, mackerel, and finely chopped vegetables such as cucumber, onion, red chili, pineapple, mint leaves, laksa leaves, and shredded torch ginger flower (kecombrang). Processed Laksa made from tamarind usually produces a sharp flavor and tastes spicy and sour. This type of Laksa is usually served with thick vermicelli (Mi Laksa) or thin vermicelli ("mee hoon") and ends with prawn brain or hae ko (蝦膏), and thick sweet shrimp paste.

In Indonesia, the most common variant of Laksa is Laksa with coconut milk-based soup. Commonly used condiments include turmeric, coriander, candlenut, lemongrass stalks, garlic, shallots, and pepper cooked in coconut milk. Laksa is also served with basil leaves (lemon basil) which are commonly used instead of kesum leaves which are commonly used in Laksa in Malaysia and Singapore. For the noodles used, thin vermicelli ("bee hoon") is most commonly used instead of thick vermicelli ("Mi laksa"). Some other recipes also add slices of ketupat which in the local language is called lontong.

There are many variations of Laksa as a culinary that best represents the Peranakan culture in Southeast Asia. This variation is adapted to the culinary nasal laksa from three countries in Southeast Asia, namely Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia.

**Laksa in Malaysia**

Pulau Pinang Laksa, also known as Asam Laksa, is a specialty of the island of Penang in Malaysia. The soup is made with mackerel and its main characteristic is the sourness which gives the soup a sour and appetizing taste. The fish is boiled and then peeled. Other ingredients that give Penang Laksa its signature taste include mint, sliced pineapple, and prawn brain.

Laksa Kedah is similar to Laksa Penang. Usually, the soup is made with eel instead of mackerel and is quite different, using Gelugur tamarind instead of the Javanese tamarind commonly used in Laksa Penang. As Malaysia's main rice-producing country, Kedah Laksa uses rice flour to make laksa noodles. Slices of hard-boiled eggs are usually added to dishes. Laksa Perlis is very similar to Kedah Laksa. Perlis Laksa sauce is quite thick because each ingredient such as mackerel, Selayang fish, temulawak, and laksa leaves are blended. The amount of fish used is also more than laksa in other states. Like Kedah Laksa, the broth is brighter and not reddish (like red chilies).

Laksa Ipoh, a specialty of the Malaysian city of Ipoh, is similar to Laksa Penang but has a more sour taste than sweet, and contains shrimp paste. The decorations used at Ipoh Laksa can be slightly different from those used in Penang Laksa.

Laksa Kuala Kangsar, also known as Perak Laksa (Laksa Perak), consists of handmade wheat noodles and a light broth. The broth is a bit lighter than Penang laksa and Kedah Laksa and very different from Ipoh Laksa, especially in presentation, taste, and smell.
Laksa Curry in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur, or the Klang Valley region, includes fried tofu, clams, string beans, and mint as signature ingredients. It is usually served with egg yolk lye ("mee") and/or vermicelli ("bee hoon") noodles.

Laksa Sarawak originates from the state of Sarawak, Malaysia. Its uniqueness lies in the mixture of spices that are not found in laksa in other states. Apart from these spices, the basic ingredients for Laksa Sarawak are vermicelli, chicken, fried tofu, omelet, bean sprouts, black mushrooms, shrimp, boiled eggs, and musk. The sauce is made from a mixture of sambal belacan, coconut milk, tamarind water, garlic, galangal, and lemongrass. Celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain calls Sarawak Laksa the 'Breakfast of the Gods.'

A bowl of Sarawak Laksa

Johor Laksa from the southern Malaysian state of Johor resembles Penang Laksa but is very different in that it is eaten with spaghetti and the sauce is made of wolf herring (machete), thick coconut milk, shallots, and spices. The uniqueness of Johor Laksa lies in the use of spaghetti and the concentration of the sauce. Johor Laksa is usually served during festive seasons and special occasions. Long ago, the people of Johor used their hands to eat this dish because it was said to be tastier.


Kelantan laksa, from the state of Kelantan in northeastern Malaysia, is similar to Laksam, but instead of thick Laksam noodles, Kelantan Laksa uses the same laksa noodles as Penang Laksa. Served with ulam, belacan, a little salt, and a little sweeter because it contains palm sugar.

Laksa Kuah Putih Terengganu is the easiest laksa recipe that is famous among people from the state of Terengganu Malaysia. Laksa Kuah Putih gets its name from the thick white coconut milk sauce. The main ingredient of Laksa Kuah Putih is boiled and chopped mackerel. The gravy is made by mixing coconut milk with hot water and usually without cooking. The broth is then mixed with black pepper, shallots, and minced fish and served topped with ulam (raw vegetables) and chilies that are blended on the side.
Laksa in Singapore

Laksa Katong, from the residential neighborhood of Katong in Singapore, is a variant of Singapore-style Laksa Fat or Singaporean Laksa. The noodles at Katong Laksa are usually cut into small pieces so that the entire dish can be eaten with just a spoon, without chopsticks or forks. Another characteristic of this laksa is its thick sauce with coconut milk and dry, ground prawns, which gives the sauce a "sand" texture.

Laksa Siglap from the Kampung Siglap neighborhood resembles Johor's laksa but is eaten with laksa noodles instead of spaghetti. Laksa is accompanied by cucumber, bean sprouts, laksa leaves, and a spoonful of chili sauce.

Laksa in Indonesia

Laksa Banjar is a variant of laksa from the city of Banjarmasin in Indonesia which has haruan fish as one of its ingredients. Similar to Palembang Lakso, instead of vermicelli or vermicelli, Banjar Laksa uses balls such as steamed noodles made from rice flour paste, served in a thick yellowish gravy made of coconut milk, ground spices, and cork fish broth. Sprinkles of fried onions (fried onions) and boiled duck eggs can also be added.

Laksa Bogor is probably the most famous variant of Laksa in Indonesia, originating from Bogor, West Java. This thick, yellowish coconut milk gravy is a mixture of shallot, garlic, candlenut, turmeric, coriander, lemongrass, and salt. It has a distinctive peanut and ground taste obtained from oncom (orange fermented peanut cake, similar to tempeh but made from various types of mushrooms mixed with soybean pulp) and served with ketupat and vinegar sauce.
Laksa Betawi (Laksa Betawi) is a variant of laksa from Jakarta, Indonesia, similar to Laksa Bogor. However, Laksa Betawi is accompanied by basil leaves, spring onions, vermicelli, and cakes. The thick yellowish gravy contains milled (dried shrimp) to give it a unique taste.

Laksa Medan from Medan, North Sumatra, is similar to Asam Laksa from northern Malaysia in terms of the ingredients used. Laksa Tangerang is a variant of laksa from Tangerang, Indonesia. The main ingredients of Laksa Tangerang are chicken broth, green beans, potatoes, and spring onions. Laksa Tangerang consists of handmade noodles from boiled white rice flour and a thick yellow gravy similar to Laksa Bogor. In addition, grated coconut and green beans are also added to give a sweet taste effect. Laksa Tangerang is appreciated for its balanced consistency of coconut milk, which is neither too thick nor too runny.

Palembang Laksan (Laksan Palembang) is a typical food from the city of Palembang in Indonesia. It consists of sliced fish cake served in a coconut milk prawn broth, topped with fried shallots. Palembang Celimpungan (Celimpungan Palembang) is also a typical Palembang food. This dish consists of a soup similar to Laksan with oval-shaped fish balls or cakes. Palembang Burgo (Burgo Palembang) is a variant of laksa from Palembang. Burgo itself refers to the filling, made from rice flour and sago flour processed to resemble a thin omelet. The broth is pale white in color, made from coconut milk and various spices. Usually accompanied by fish sauce, hard-
boiled eggs, and fried onions. Palembang Lakso (Lakso Palembang) is a variant of laksa from Palembang. Unlike Laksan, Lakso consists of steamed sago paste-like noodles but is served in a Burgo-like coconut milk sauce with only added turmeric and sprinkled with fried shallots.

CLOSING

Peranakan people bring many inventions to Southeast Asian culture. One of them is culinary with laksa as one of the well-known cuisines from Southeast Asia. Laksa usually available in many cities across Southeast Asia with significant Chinese population such as Penang, Malacca, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Medan, Palembang, and Jakarta. Nevertheless, Laksa is also can be found in other place with difference ingredients, cooking techniques, preparation and serving. The diversity of Laksa menu gives credit to Peranakan culture which born from acculturation of man Chinese immigrant and local people in Southeast Asia. The experience of eating Laksa is colloquially same as tasting the flavor of Southeast Asia.

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